

Is God a Perfectionist?

A close-up of a blue and white striped fabric, possibly a curtain or a piece of clothing. A yellow rectangular label is attached to the fabric, featuring the text "GARDEN" in large letters and "WATERPROOF" in smaller letters below it.

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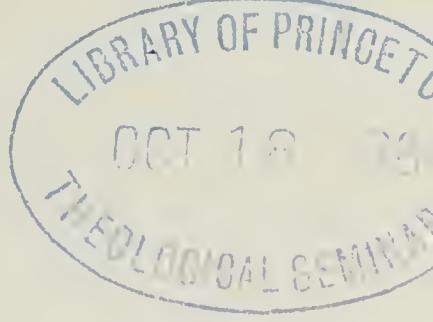
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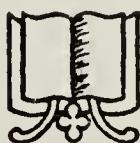


Is God a Personality?

BY

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1923

TO THE BELOVED AND REVERED MEMORY
OF
BORDEN P. BOWNE, Ph.D., LL.D.
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

PREFACE

In the midst of the modern deluge of literature, there is only one adequate excuse for offering to the serious public a short work of this kind, and this is the scarcity of volumes on the subject of personality and the almost universal tendency of thoughtful writers to avoid the effort of showing the validity of this essential attribute of the Divine Being. The deduction of this category, only here attempted, is well within the reach of modern intellectual endeavor.

C. W. S.

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IS GOD A PERSONALITY?

I

Introduction

JN the primitive mind no question ever arose as to the validity of its leading ideas either in its crude science or its religion. Whether the ideas came to the waking mind under the stress of adverse circumstances or to the unconscious mind in placid sleep, it made little difference. They were considered true of objective reality. That is, man's consciousness from the very beginning has been ontological and it was only with a great effort that he could think away the object with which his ideas were intended to correspond. As soon as

man grew reflective, however, he became cognizant of the fact that his individual consciousness was scrappy and, in contrast with this, objective experience had every appearance of being continuous. Immediately the question arose,—does my subjective cognitive process that indicates an external object, really copy that object? Do I know reality apart from any mind or is the cognitive idea only engaged with its own constructs? With the advent of such questions arose earnest investigation looking towards the solution of the problems involved.

A man may be religious and yet his object of adoration may not satisfy the theistic postulates, for religion does not demand Theism. For instance, the intellectual Brahman was deeply religious but the Upanishad philosopher did not hesitate to assert

that he himself was God; the Hindu's soul was bound up in religion but he believed in Vishnu and Civa; the ancient Greek was careful about his religious rites but he envisaged many Gods the chief of which was Dyaus Zeus, that is, the shining sky; the Chinese Taoist placed religion above all, but his God was unknowable and indefinable and yet he could be called the "Equable," the "Inaudible" and the "Subtle" but this further statement could be risked concerning him, namely, that all existence in the universe sprang from him whose name is Tao. The attributes of fatherhood or personality or spirituality could not be ascribed to him.

Religion has had many attempted definitions but like "personality" it has not yet been adequately defined. Bernard Bosanquet remarks that "religion is essentially an attitude in

which the finite being stands to whatever he at once fears and approves,"¹ with the implication that this being for religion may be almost anything and even the dog's attitude toward his master may be regarded as religious.² There is both an intuitional and an intellectual element present in the religious reaction and the difficulty is to strike a proper balance in reference to them. Max Müller, Spencer, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel and the followers of the latter lay too much stress upon the intellect while others such as Jacobi, Schleiermacher, and Höffding emphasized the feeling too greatly. A full definition of religion must include the activity of all man's faculties including the will, the feeling and the intellect.

¹ *Vid.* "The Value and Destiny of the Individual," p. 235, B. Bosanquet.

² *Op. Cit.* p. 236.

The religious consciousness could not stand long "on its own foundation." It sought rationalization and interpretation and thus we have theology. Thought has been instrumental in lifting religion from its former level so that now it can appeal to the greatest minds. Thought has surrounded the feeling nucleus of religion and so brightened it that it now shines with its own light, but, it took ages and ages to dissipate the darkness that first surrounded it. As soon as thought began to gain more power, the fields of investigation began to be narrowed and theories about the being of God came upon the scene and were separated from the earlier theological ideas which already assumed that the Divine Being existed with qualities which could be easily defined. Theism then came into being. Just as psychology assumes the exis-

tence of space and time and the “dualism of Object and Subject and their pre-established harmony,”³ whatever the psychologist’s philosophical standpoint may be, so theology assumes that the object of its theories has an existence, but Theism engages itself with the problem as to whether or not the existence of this being can be supported by rational arguments.

³ “Psychology,” Vol. I. p. 220, James.

CHAPTER II

The Back-bone of Theism

Theism holds that there is a personal cause for all things in the universe. “Theists believe in a personal Being of infinite rightness and infinite goodness wielding infinite wisdom and infinite power.”⁴ Robert Flint’s definition is very similar including a power that is infinite and a wisdom and goodness that are upon the same level.⁵ He, however, adds the notion of “self-existence” which may be properly included in the attribute of infinite power. Bowne included in the extended definition unchangeableness and self-equality.

⁴ *Vid.* “The Knowledge of God,” Gifford Lectures, Vol. 1. p. 40, Gwatkin.

⁵ *Cf.* “Theism,” p. 18, Robert Flint.

But there is little use in the multiplication of attributes. If the theist can establish spirituality, personality, transcendence and unity as attributes of the Divine Being, he may congratulate himself. But the human mind is never satisfied and the tendency is always to overdo the matter especially in the philosophical field.

1. The Divine Being is Spiritual. It is not our intention just here to go into a full discussion of Materialism or Naturalism but simply to refer to it as it bears upon the leading ideas of Theism. One is a materialist if he has the habit of “explaining higher phenomena by lower ones, and leaving the destinies of the world at the mercy of its blinder parts and forces.”⁶ For Materialism, the laws

⁶ *Vid.* “Pragmatism,” p. 93, William James.

of nature, as partially recorded in the human mind, run the universe and all phenomena are guided by these blind laws. For Spiritualism, mind stands uppermost and so important is it that it is regarded as the essential agent that operates the universe. There is so much difference between the two standpoints that the waving of the Jamesian pragmatistic wand is not sufficient to make it merely a “conflict between aesthetic preferences.”⁷ The Spencerian process of matter refinement only succeeds in showing that there is a principle superior to matter and Haeckel’s “Riddle of the Universe” finds its best solution in that which he tried in vain to escape as an essential principle, namely Spirit.

James agrees with Bowne, Ladd and many others, that the deepest

⁷ *Ibid.* p. 94, 98.

need of the human soul is that there should be an eternal moral order of the world, but Materialism or Naturalism denies the existence of this order. Thus, there is a great difference between the two, both in reference to the past and future. The time element here, seems to have confused the late Harvard philosopher. What the Divine has done in the past is at least some indication of what He will do in the future for past and present, which are words of distinctly human import, may be also moments in the "present" time-span of God. Materialism would have the world-events of the past guided by a blind principle which only gains progress by chance and the future of the world to display a similar character until the tragic end comes in the destruction of all things including the mind and all its ideals. Theism or Spirit-

ualism represents a Divine Being always intelligent and not merely becoming intelligent in man and, thus, always guiding the world according to the idea of the good. In the past, this guidance, so evident in history, has been freely given and in the future, man has every reason to believe, it will continue, assuring him that his ideals, which indeed have their place somewhere in the divine order, will be preserved and made to prevail.

That the Divine Being is Spiritual is the result of a long agony of thought reinforced by Divine enlightenment. To reduce Him to anything less would be the belittling of man himself who, in his rational moments, is constantly shedding forth the God-given light that is within him. Certainly, his interpretation will always be inadequate but he is bound to put

in the forefront what he considers the most valuable "when his life is fullest and his soul at its highest stretch."

Almost every system of philosophy acknowledges the spiritual basis of nature. One would think in reading the realistic literature of the day that Realism also acknowledged this. Thus, Professor Edwin B. Holt remarks: "To Professor Royce . . . I owe my notions of the conceptual nature of the universe."⁸ "Mathematical and logical concepts are made out of "concept-stuff."⁹ Now "concept-stuff," or neutral material out of which "concepts" can be made is so "infinitely and incredibly refined"¹⁰ that it is nothing short of spiritual. To have

⁸ Cf. "The Concept of Consciousness," p. xiii, Edwin Holt.

⁹ *Op. Cit.* p. 136,

¹⁰ "Pragmatism," p. 95, William James. Here James uses this expression in reference to Mr. Spencer's attitude towards matter.

that spiritual stuff floating around without an adequate mind to produce or even receive it and to have that precious material wasted except when it comes in contact, under right conditions with a human organism, is both incredible and intolerable.

Professor Spaulding of Princeton regards the universe as consisting of three kinds of facts, physical, conceptual and ideal. The physical world exists of its own right consisting of physical facts that may illuminate a human organism and may not. The conceptual world consists of mathematical and logical concepts and the ideal world is the realm of aesthetic and moral entities such as beauty and justice. Thus, the mystic's world is conceded to be as real as the world of symmetrical and asymmetrical relations but hardly of as much value. Thus, we have three

different kinds of irreducible facts in the universe. Each can be brought into relation with the other without one being dependent upon the other.

Alexander, the English realist in his "Presidential Addresses before the Aristotelian Society," described perceptions as "non-mental realities." Perceptions, according to this, have an existence of their own just as concepts subsist before anyone mentally grasps them. Perry refers to the "mind without and the mind within." Thus, it appears as if Realism concludes that the world is partly physical and partly spiritual.

The human mind, at its highest reach, is not satisfied with a division within the heart of reality. It seeks unity; it seeks oneness but that unity need not be an absolute unity that destroys freedom and that unity can only be the outcome of the activity

of a spiritual world-ground. The fact that all superior minds have finally rejected materialistic Monism and piece-meal Idealism shows that neither of these can satisfy man's life. We are, thus, driven by a certain thought and will compulsion to some form of Idealism. The mighty power in the world that we call religion demands a Supreme Spiritual Being called God, our moral nature demands that he be moral and our rational nature demands that he be rational. Man will not finally accept three different orders. In his demand for unity he conceives them as one—the spiritual basis of the universe. "Doubt him (God) and you shake the objective value of your own cognition."¹¹

¹¹ *Vid.* "A Philosophical System of Theistic Idealism," p. 75, Lindsay.

2. The Divine Being is Personal.

Since modern men have begun to notice the lack of literature on personality and to feel how important this conception is for philosophical and theological thought, some of the most acute among them are attempting to write in order on a subject that has long needed rational treatment. If men have no definition of personality, they say there is little sense in applying it to the Divine Being. In their efforts to define it, some have moved along psychological lines, others have taken a purely speculative view, and still others have given up the attempt to understand or define it and have placed it on the shelf together with other terms labelled with the words *sui generis*. This label clearly signifies that there is a tendency to give up the attempt at definition. It might be worth while

to add that many objects are even now in process of definition. Man has not been shot upon the scene perfectly rational. God's plan has been by the slow path of development. It has only been within the last forty years that the mathematical definition of infinite numbers has been discovered and this was done by Georg Cantor shortly before 1882. The definition of number itself was discovered or constructed about the same time by Gottlob Frege of Jena. The problem of the numerical infinite had proved itself puzzling from the time of Zeno and infinite numbers were thought to be self-contradictory until modern light was thrown upon the problem. To this day, James, Bergson, and certain other philosophers, impelled by the doctrine that all analysis is falsification, teach that motion escapes definition altogether

and must be felt, whenever it is taken account of at all. On the other hand, Bertrand Russell and his realistic colleagues accept the heroic theory of the "conception of instants without duration."¹² Now suppose one came forward with the idea that there was no motion because it could not be defined or because the mind could not give any but a heroic definition of it. The disproof of the statement would be evident in the movement of the tongue of the speaker himself and the auditor could disprove it by merely lifting his arm, rising from his seat or winking his eye. Nothing is more evident than movement and nothing is harder of definition. Royce has shown how difficult it is to define an individual and how still more difficult

¹² *Vid.* "Scientific Method in Philosophy," p. 151, Bertrand Russell.

it is to discover one with the senses, yet without an individual there could never be a class and without a class of individuals there could never be such a logical entity as a relation. Thus, the conclusion is, there must be individuals and if they are not found sensibly they must be assumed or the mind would have to give up entirely its orderly work.

Although personality is still in the hands of the definers and much brain energy is being expended upon it and the sense data that indicate its presence are very meagre, yet self-consciousness and orderly self-determination are acknowledged to be included in its definition. The first presupposes intellect and the second will, for as Royce suggests, the self has a "past"¹³ and is oppressed with num-

¹³ "The Problem of Christianity," Vol. II, p. 40.

erous “needs.” That is, a “finite personality is a will to do something.” Chaotic activity by no means suggests a person as in the case of the thunder-clap or the wind roaring on the ocean. It must be orderly and suggestive of design. Certainly, there are ideal enlargements of personality and many of the writers of the past such as Augustine, Anselm and Thomas Aquinas and of the present such as Schlossmann, Harnack, Gierke, Trendelenburg, Max Müller and Paul Carus have not hesitated to include other qualities in the conception, but self-consciousness and self-determination cannot be omitted from the definition. We can, thus, recognize the nature of personality and have some notion of what we mean when we refer to it. The lack of a definition fully adequate should not deter us from referring it to man and, for greater reasons, to God.

(i) Personality in Man.

The argument for the personality of God is closely related to the argument for the personality of man. If man is not known to be a person it is still harder to know what personality is and more difficult to apply it to God.

Kant was empiricist enough to hold that there could be no fruitful conception of the ego any more than of God because it is impossible to schematize either one or the other. If we could conjure up God or the ego in pure intuition, definition would be possible, but not otherwise. You cannot know God, he thought, because the mind is too narrow to grasp the whole of all existence and there can be no "intuition" or experience connected with this conception. Again, the soul or ego cannot be known because it is impossible for it

to be the object of itself and in seeking to grasp it we keep constantly turning around it but never succeed in reaching it. The ego cannot know itself by means of the categories. It is only the condition of the possibility of experience and we cannot properly say that it is a substance, for all substances are determined in relation to it.

The main objection Kant had to Rational Psychology was stated by him thus: "The assumed predicates of the soul—even if they should be supposed to be its real properties—constitute an idea which could not possibly be presented in the concrete."¹⁴ The x of experience he thought necessary, if the self was to be known as an object and any synthetic judg-

¹⁴ The "Prolegomena" describes it as "something to which all thinking stands in relation."

ments made concerning it. Thus, he concluded that no one knew anything about the properties of the soul. It was regarded as merely a "regulative idea" which may be useful in psychological investigation, but the investigator was never to forget that he was dealing with an idea and not a concrete thing. Because of the absence of intuition here the only judgments that could be made concerning it were analytic.

But why, we ask, should not the judgments concerning self-consciousness or the soul be synthetic as well as others? On the Kantian hypothesis, of course, they could not be, but the modern mind has given up the demand for schematization in the Kantian sense and, in the absence of this demand, we can look more hopefully upon the whole situation. Kant thought that we could be sure of our

mathematical knowledge but there is something far more concrete in the feeling of the self than in mathematics and in fact mathematics itself presupposes the self that is thinking it.

Kant is certainly inconsistent here, for he reduces the self to a bare consciousness of unity, or feeling of existence accompanying all human ideas, and yet presupposes that it originates an idea which is really a good deal more than the thought of unity, for it is the actual idea of a self used, however, as a regulative principle. Again, if the “self” carries with it the machinery of the categories which is always at work whenever we think, in the working of these categories we have a vast knowledge of the self, that is we know how the self works in gaining knowledge but this of course, gives us no inkling of its

freedom or immortality but nevertheless gives us knowledge of it.

Any one can see that Kant's difficulty was the presence of his mechanical empiricism. He found it impossible to break away from Hume. The pure intuition ever harassed him as the ghost of the Humian empiricism. This was constantly appearing and claiming recognition. This is evident in his disparagement of psychology when he tries to show that in the continual flux of the inner life the parts could not be separated and put together again and, even under observation he pointed out, the object was transfigured to such an extent that its nature entirely disappeared in the process. He, thus, concluded that psychology was merely a systematic historical summation of facts not worthy of the name of science. But the thoughtful student cannot help ob-

serving that even in the phenomenal world, there is no absolute isolation of parts. Ernst Mack has made this clear by showing that all facts are already in a matrix of relations and it is only by conceptual abstraction that one part can be separated from another and, if this conceptual manipulation is allowable in respect of external nature which exhibits no example of isolation and unity of parts, why should it not be in reference to the human self?

Kant's eye is full upon "experience" and thinking that the laws of phenomena had proper application only to external phenomena, he was led to reject psychology on the one hand and all theories concerning God on the other. It is true that no mathematical figure can be made either of the finite or the infinite self. Their natures refuse to be measured or cal-

culated by homogeneous units. One cannot use here the mechanical and mathematical language so necessary in the exact sciences. But this does not exclude synthesis and leave the eager investigator on the level of bare analysis. Synthesis in mathematics is attained when one judgment is seen to imply another. This is done without the empirical background. In other fields knowledge is also possible after the same manner, for man's intelligence is indeed an instrument of synthesis. If mathematics is the free creation of the human spirit as some hold, and exact knowledge is attained there without question, why should the human spirit be impotent to define its own nature? And why should it be impotent in the presence of God? If space, the chosen groundwork for the configurations of geometry, is merely a conception, as

moderns would have it, and if intelligence has created it upon the basis of which vast knowledge of an exact and absolute character has been attained so useful in our every day life, is it at all likely that it fails entirely to form an adequate and exact conception of the human self?

It might be allowable just here to refer to some other views of the self. John Locke believed in a metaphysical something within man and also within physical nature but confessed that "we have no clear ideas"¹⁵ of them. Berkeley judged that "material substance"¹⁶ had no meaning apart from unified sensations and Hume asserted, without any reserve, that we have no idea whatever of a substance

¹⁵ *Vid.* "Essay Concerning the Human Understanding," Book 1. Ch. IV. 18.

¹⁶ *Vid.* "Principles of the Human Understanding," pt. 1, Sec. 17, 20.

distinct from that of a collection of particular qualities.¹⁷ Bain agreed that there was no such thing as a self. On this basis, some recommend that instead of saying, "I think," one should say, "it is thinking" or "thinking is taking place" just as one would remark on a rainy day, "it is raining."

Professor James had no hesitation in adopting a similar view for he shows, to his own satisfaction at least, that "climate" is not an entity behind a series of days but is merely a name for the qualified series itself, and wealth is no virtue pertaining to a wealthy man but is a comprehensive name for his lands and houses and bank account. His thought here leads to the further pragmatistic notion that "truth" is something of the same order and refers to certain successful

¹⁷ Cf. "Treatise on Human Nature," Part 1, Section 6.

happenings in human life. "Behind (the) fact there is nothing," says William James, in thorough agreement with David Hume; all we have is a series of coherent conscious facts.

Professor James is also in accord with John Stuart Mill in this way of regarding the conscious facts of human life. Ideas hang together, he used to say, "next to next" as meshes in a net and the ordinary ego as well as the transcendental ego are ruled out. But the strung-along series of ideas, floating upon nothing that can be known, has the power of being self-conscious. That is, the series can be conscious of itself. But many have seen the difficulty here and have asked how a series of ideas could be conscious of itself and how there could be coherent ideas at all without a thinker. This is the "idiotic" spot

in the philosophy of both Mill and James.

There is a certain intuition present in the apprehension of the self. We cannot seem to get away from this intuition in our waking moments. The ego as defined, is not presented to the senses for in describing its characteristics, it is seen that the mind has already been at work upon it. Again, unity and identity are not necessarily involved in the ego (for all necessity is logical in its nature), unless the ego be first consciously or unconsciously regarded as containing them. The intuition of the self is merely a flash; it is almost vacuous, but it is the only basis of experience that we have to work with. It is far more defective than a concept could be. But we begin at once to define it and if we "don't understand we define

our definition.” Thus we gain an interpretation of the self or personality.

We acknowledge that the world owes a debt of gratitude to Hume, James and their followers for having called its attention to happenings and activities and away from “substance,” but the pendulum that had swung so far in the rationalistic direction has, in the case of these men, swung so far in the opposite direction that we have lost sight not only of active centres of consciousness but also of knowledge of the external world. On the basis of their philosophy, nothing but judgments of perception are possible. Organized knowledge cannot be reached and even the laws of external nature hang in the air. Mathematics is considered an experimental science and we are supposed to have gained our ideas of space from “tangible points” arranged in a certain order.

Space, time and all the categories came from experience. It was this conclusion—the natural outcome of radical empiricism—that aroused Kant from his dogmatic slumbers and caused him to take his stand, as a true champion, on the side of the natural sciences. He would save science from utter ruin by rescuing it from the outer world. His Aesthetic was, thus, an earnest effort to save mathematics and the Analytic to rescue natural science. But he rescued them by sweeping them all into the mind, believing that if he could show that the fundamental laws of science belonged to the very structure of the mind itself, he could insure them against all the darts of the evil one. But being concerned mainly with the natural sciences and not being able to entirely throw off the grip of empiricism, his philosophy did not suc-

ceed in establishing the possibility of the knowledge of the self. Thus, he concluded that there was no knowledge of the self because it refused schematization or the possibility of intuition (*Anschauung*). In respect of knowledge of the ego then, Kant makes little advancement beyond the empiricists that preceded him.

The revival of the Humian philosophy in modern days with its disparagement of science and its fundamental repudiation of all metaphysical knowledge has also brought forth a reaction similar to the Kantian. The only difference is, this reaction has exhibited a firmer faith in the intellect. It is not satisfied with bare criticism. It demands something positive and the intellect is looked up to as the chief instrument of this positiveness. Certainly, feeling and will are not repudiated but once more we

have hopefully climbed into the Greek atmosphere of faith in the human reason. Thus, we conclude that to deny personality to man is against experience, absolutely intolerable and wholly unreasonable.

Self-consciousness and self-control are the fundamental elements of human personality, and the latter means that the self has the power of origination and direction according to law. Kant had stated that an uncaused event was inconceivable but this is acknowledged to be an excessive statement due to his general attitude toward science and his view that causality was a primal law of the human mind.

If the difference between the concept of causality as applied to a centre of consciousness and the concept as applied to physical nature had always been kept in mind, much of the men-

tal energy wasted on the subject might have been spared. The objective attitude is always the best and is always taken when dealing with the science of the external world, and such a writer as Hobbes makes the law of uniformity all inclusive so that all ideas take their places in the stream of causal events, excluding the personal equation in each case, each idea being caused by some other in a sequential line and so on *ad infinitum*. But such a moderate man as Helmholtz referred to this law as a “presupposition” and Bertrand Russell remarks concerning the theory of continuity that, “there can never be any empirical evidence to demonstrate that the sensible world is continuous.. The continuity of space and time, the infinite number of different shades in the spectrum.. are all in the

nature of unverifiable hypothesis.”¹⁸ Again, he remarks: “The strict, certain, universal law of causation which philosophers advocate is an ideal, possibly true, but not known to be true by any available evidence.”¹⁹ It is really something that the mind, taking its cue from the consciousness of its own initiative, persistently thrusts into the face of reality but is not experientially supported when the mind absolutely asserts that it is universal.

In dealing with the self, as we have seen, another meaning is given to the concept of causation. It is not here merely phenomena conforming to law. It includes teleological categories and the origination and expenditure of spiritual energy. The objec-

¹⁸ *Vid.* “Scientific Method in Philosophy,” 1914 p. 148, 149.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 226.

tive and mechanical view-point is very useful for scientific and naturalistic purposes but one should see that the mind that originated the objective viewpoint in respect of the physical world, can take another attitude when dealing with itself. Causation in the spiritual world is actually primal in time and man would never have applied it to the physical world if he had not first recognized it within himself. As it is, the conception in its fullness and richness is withheld from the external world and, except in the case of primitive man and the unsophisticated among us, an idea altogether truncated is applied to it. The ideas of efficiency, spontaneity and purpose are closely related to the primitive idea as belonging to the self but as applied to the outside world, these ideas are abstracted. When we look back upon

the course of history our idea is not of a mechanical line of causal events written on paper as Hobbes would have it, but of an account of new beginnings. Only the mind debauched with scientific learning will apply the mechanical concept to this entire process. Certainly, many volitions are subject to causes but there is no proof that all of them are. Some of them may, as Bergson taught, be genuine novelties in the world. In fact our inevitable conception of a self includes at least some ideas of origination and design. We refuse to believe that freedom is only a name for our ignorance of the future and lack of memory of the past. We refuse to be mere pawns upon the chess-board of life. And this volition is based upon an "owned" experience of internal determinations. These experiences so possess us that they lead to

the inevitable interpretation that there is an agent present possessing the power of self-determination.

(ii) Personality in God.

It is, as all will acknowledge, possible to conceive a religion without belief in a personal God for, indeed, such religions have existed and do exist. Leuba defines religion as a "belief in a great and superior psychic power—whether personal or not."²⁰ But this definition is so wide and so vacuous that it is of little value to us. When, however, we consider the possible attributes of a Being that will fully satisfy the modern soul, we cannot stop short of personality. It isn't true in general that upon reaching maturity we find ourselves "be-

²⁰ *Vid.* "The Psychological Origin and the Nature of Religion," in the *Religions Ancient and Modern* series. p. 92.

reft" of "personal divinities"²¹ that have been so helpful to us in the long stages of spiritual development. It is also far from accurate that man in general is seeking "an impersonal efficient substitute." The statement is too sweeping. Man is not seeking, and never has seriously sought, an "impersonal substitute" for Deity. It has always been unnatural for him to do this. Even when he has become pantheistic in his belief, he has defined the nature of his own finite self as a will to fulfill itself or a yearning or a dissatisfaction and one of the objects of his yearning search was to discover, if possible, a being who possessed something akin to his own most precious possession, namely personality. The tendency is always to interpret the world after the model of

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 94.

the very highest it contains. Certainly, it may be conceded that an object that appears at first altogether strange will, according to the law of psychological development after long and habitual consideration and use in a certain manner, finally demand a belief entirely of a dominating character. Thus, the unsophisticated mind can be trained to function in a particular groove if vital interests and circumstances lead it in this direction long enough. Again, the personal equation on the part of certain individuals and circumstantial trend on the part of some races have been instrumental in bringing about a train of thought that has eventuated in Pantheism. But this standpoint is not natural or ultimate. Man's natural desire is not to be overwhelmed in a vast sea of being. When the trend of his entire nature is consulted

it will be seen that his deepest longing is for ultimate safety and preservation as a personal entity, and the being that he is willing to worship is one akin to himself but vastly superior and this being will, thus, possess personality. No deity could hold the respect of the developed consciousness and satisfy the rational will that was conceived to possess a nature of less ethical importance than that of the would-be worshipper. If, then, we are sure that there is such a thing as human personality, it cannot be refused to the Deity.

Can the personality of God be supported by adequate reasons? Is personality, as applied to the Deity, merely an impulse of faith with no reason behind it or is it the outcome of deliberate rational insight? The latter appears to have much truth in it although many have said that it

could not receive the support of philosophy.

When those who framed the Nicene Creed in 325 and modified it in the Nicaeno - Constantinopolitan Creed of 381 wrote, "We believe in one God" although they might not have had a very clear conception of personality, they meant to refer to God whatever ethical attributes were in man lifted to their highest terms. The great question of tri-personality in the face of Monarchianism and Sabellianism was the outstanding problem for the fathers but no question existed in their minds as to the total personality of the Deity. The treatment of the personality of God in general has been left to modern defenders of the faith against Pantheism. The question of general personality seemed to be so rational to Augustine in his *City of God* and to Athanasius in his writings that

they never call it into question. It was for them the primal assumption and clearly the result of the deepest reason. But do we find it reasonable in this day? This question leads us to look at the ambiguity of the word "reason." If "reason" is used to designate a *Weltanschauung* which is broad enough to include not only the intellectual reaction but the moral consciousness together with the aesthetic, then we can say that there is nothing whatever against it. It is only when reason is narrowed down to the bare *Verstand* or understanding that the mind finds difficulty in comprehending it.

Mr. Balfour has made a great mistake in opposing reason to authority when really the latter should include the former. Certainly, man craves authority. He yearns to submit his private will to a deeper will or to sub-

ordinate himself to something higher than his fragmentary ego. But this whole process involves reason. Authority sometimes rests upon utility, as in the case of the relation of an officer to his men, but it is reason within man that proclaims loudly that it is the best for him to subordinate himself as a bare item in a whole, because it appears to him intrinsically right. Thus, when man's private will rebels, his rational will exercises coercion upon him to which, in moments of insight, he is perfectly willing to submit. Thus, as Dr. Strong remarks, there is always an element of consent in authority although individual feeling is not, in every case, considered.

John Stuart Mill had the impression that no belief such as the Personality of God should be impressed upon the young. But this course

would be a great handicap, as it would refuse to the young person knowledge of his own deepest will. No young person understands fully his own deepest meaning or what is needed to fulfil his nature. It must be revealed to him by the coercion of rational thought impressed from without as well as reinforced from within. Since the majority of mankind never attain the mentality necessary for independent judgment, it seems altogether rational for men to bow to reasonable authority in great questions whose answers already display the light of reason. Authority must not be considered, then, in opposition to reason. It is not the "rival and opponent of reason." It is not a "non-rational cause . . . which produces its results by psychic processes other than reasoning."²² We are not

²² *Vid.* "Foundations of Belief," p. 219, Balfour.

pushed on by a series of non-rational causes to a belief in a personal God. Reason, as inclusively defined, comes first upon the scene but, in the sense of clear mentality, manifests itself late in the development of man. But the fact that it appears late is no indication that it does not appear, in some degree, earlier. Höffding makes authority depend upon the preservation of the values of human personality. This is a purely subjective viewpoint. While Balfour lays too much stress upon the absence of the rational in authority, Höffding emphasizes a standpoint that clearly leads to subjectivity. Authority must include rationality although this quality may, by no means, be evident to the majority that accept it. It must also include an element of externality as well as subjective consent.

The Kantian notion of “pure reason” has no foundation in reality. Reason is never pure and never has had that characteristic. If Kant had not circumscribed reason so narrowly and enclosed it in such narrow compartments, he would have had less difficulty in reaching reality and would not have been led into so many contradictions in the explication of his system. Reason is a broad concept and must be made to include the activities of the moral and aesthetic life and, when it is thus considered and the greatest of all problems is under investigation, the personality of God is acknowledged to be the ultimate category for reasonable men. In man, as Garvie says, it is properly conceived as “progressive” but in God it is “perfect.”²³ But so strong is the

²³ *Vid.* “Handbook of Christian Apologetics,” p. 19.

rational demand for it that in its absence life is greatly weakened and entirely dissatisfied. Man's personality is "temporal;" God's personality is "eternal." "Man's thoughts are consecutive, God's thoughts are the truths which neither originate nor pass away; they are the laws of nature, the determinant factors of all that happens."²⁴

(a) Limitation of God.

The chief objection to the application of personality to Deity is that it is said to limit the Holy One of Israel. Fichte comes up for notice here. In his *Wissenschaftslehre* which produced such a ghostly impression upon Kant, he conceived the world as constructed entirely out of self-consciousness, and in his *Ueber den*

²⁴ "Personality," p. 64, Paul Carus.

Grund unseres Glaubens an eine göttliche Weltregierung he took occasion to define “God” as the “living and operative moral order” of the world in which every individual had his definite place. Personality in both man and God, he considered, presupposed a limiting object. Hegel dismissed divine personality for the same reason and yet he found the Absolute limiting itself in various other ways. On the other hand, many teachers of today hold that in its fullest sense personality can be ascribed to the Infinite only. Paul Carus makes him super-personal in a sense that we cannot accept for he asserts that God’s personality and man’s “are different” not in degree but in kind.”²⁵ Certainly,

²⁵ *Vid.* “Personality,” p. 64, Paul Carus. See also “Personality, Human and Divine,” by Illingworth. See also “God,” p. 194, by Paul Carus where he denies the existence of a personal God as well as that of an “ego soul.”

Yahveh has said: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, etc." but this might only refer to the infinite grasp of his mind while the divine attributes that satisfy men's hearts must be akin to their own and not entirely different.

Personality, in general, is not limitation. Certainly, by contrast with an external object man's feeling of the self is emphasized but there is a core of feeling within him from the very first. It is this core of feeling that the realist finds so difficult to explain; it is this illumination of the organism that he would like, if possible, to relegate to the "mind without." There are certain "proprio-ceptive" sensations that belong to man which do not depend primarily upon external stimulus. "My mind possesses sense-contents that cannot be similarly presented in any other

mind.”²⁶ In pleasure and pain there is also an indication of the self altogether apart from the confrontation of the subject by an object. Again, in scientific investigation the scientist is very careful to eliminate what he calls the personal equation. In ordinary life a summation of opinions in which the subjective element is prominent is sufficient to carry one along, but science seeks to make accurate and trustworthy records of the natural phenomena investigated. The effort is to make personal knowledge impersonal. Thus, great stress is laid upon “records” which give the results of many investigations by various eminent men.

In psychology also the investigator must make due allowance for the

²⁶ “Present Philosophical Tendencies,” p. 293, Perry. For a more radical treatment of mind, see “The Concept of Consciousness,” pp. 183, 184, Holt.

element mentioned above. The scientist, therefore, whether in the investigation of individual experience, as in psychology, or in dealing with experience in general, as it appears in the external world, has always recognized that there is a core of individual experience which hinders the unbiased and accurate record of external phenomenal facts. This, of course, needs the light of reason. Yet, at the same time, it is a sense nucleus upon which a personality can be built.

Personality in God is unlimited and perfect and may not need an external object to constitute its reality and those sense-experiences and proprioceptive sensations which Couturat relegated to the "rubbish and residuum" of the mind may be just a hint of what this personality might include. Again, the notion of a di-

vine intellectual intuition, referred to by Kant, by which God freely generates his own objects and thinks them into being himself, renders unnecessary the conclusion that personality limits the Divine.

John Stuart Mill in the first half of the nineteenth century, wrote: "The evidences, therefore of Natural Theology distinctly imply that the author of the Kosmos worked under limitations."²⁷ The very notion of design he considers to be sufficient evidence against omnipotence. But Stuart Mill has left out of account the conception of self-limitation by purpose. A being who could not limit himself would be less than a human personality for the latter finds little difficulty in doing this. Every rational being who works at all, works according to

²⁷ *Vid.* "Three Essays on Religion," p. 137.

some plan. That plan may be conceived by himself or impressed from without. To work according to the plan of another, would indicate limitation but to act according to one's own plan would not suggest anything of the kind. Suppose an omnipotent, rational being decided, by his own free will, to refrain from external activity and to do nothing but deliberate, he would be planning or designing and his design would be to abstain from external activity such as he would exercise in creation and merely to think. His thought would be according to some plan or design, whatever the outline of that design may be. Thus, design is no disparagement of omnipotence. Purposive limitation is, thus, what we would expect of a being with ethical attributes interested in his dependent creatures.

Bosanquet found purpose every-

where in external or non-organic nature for as the Divine Being worked in nature he worked according to a systematic and coherent plan. The finite mind in looking at nature external to itself would thus behold a mechanism and the concept of mechanism is considered to be in no sense incompatible with the concept of teleology. “Below consciousness” in nature, teleological work is constantly going on as well as “above consciousness” in Providence and the design of a finite mind is only a reflection of the purpose of the Whole. Bosanquet’s standpoint in general is, of course, different from ours but he has, nevertheless, effectively shown that purpose does not imply limitation but that, as it is reflected in finite minds, it must be acknowledged to be the result of the wisdom of an Absolute Being.

(b) Anthropomorphism.

No man can think without some degree of anthropomorphism. Thus, no special blame should be attached to the theist if he introduces this characteristic into his thought concerning God. F. C. S. Schiller assures us on the one hand, that it is impossible to clear our thoughts from this, and thus we should glory in it. On the other hand, Paul Carus warns us that its presence is nothing short of a grievous taint that must be gotten rid of, especially in our thoughts concerning God. "God as the absolute unity of the formative factors of the world, the ultimate norm of all existence in its superreal eternity, is not in need of consciousness and could not, without gross anthropomorphism, be said to be conscious of himself."²⁸ Dr.

²⁸ *Vid.* "God, an Enquiry and a Solution," p. 232.

Carus fails to realize here that the process of anthropomorphization has been going on in the human mind from time immemorial. Man can understand his world only in so far as there is harmony between his thinking and it. The very categories that he uses in dealing with the phenomenal world are his own categories. They get most of their meaning from the depths of his own will and cannot be barely a copy of that which he finds in nature. We cannot help agreeing with Professor Ladd that "causal connections" as referred to the objective world are just as anthropomorphic as "the animism of the savages." A law of nature such as causation cannot, then, compel or forbid anything. The thorough-going scientific mind finds great satisfaction in purely mechanical causation and why should it not, since this law is the outcome of

the rational will itself. The law of causality need not be universal but it is highly convenient to apply it universally. The fact that we do not apply it to God himself, shows what liberty we have in its use.

If the phenomenal world yields up its mysteries on condition of the application of the categories, which are indeed intimately connected with man's rational will and are shot through with human desire to conquer reality, why should these rational constructs be entirely helpless when the value of the whole is considered? Is it not enough to show that man's entire rational nature demands a knowledge of the Being who initiates all and controls all and, when God is conceived in the light of that which is most precious to man when his nature is at its highest stretch, the knowledge afforded must

approximate truth. We can concede to F. C. S. Schiller that in thinking it is impossible to "abstract from the personality of the knower."²⁹ But we might add that in so far as that personality rises to the heights of rationality, it would be a renunciation of reality altogether to try to escape from it for the God concept is the result of our deepest rational will.

Consider how man is deprived of those things that are dearest to him, if he follows the mechanical ideal and refuses to be anthropomorphic in respect of his God. Deprive him of anthropomorphism in the above-mentioned sphere and immediately all his ideals become bare mental images and loyalty, reverence and religion are degraded to the level of "*Fik-*

²⁹ *Vid.* "Studies in Humanism," p. 95.

tionen.”³⁰ and he is guilty of what Vaihinger calls “*der Verwandlung Subjektiver Denkvorgänge in objektive Weltvorgänge.*”

Through the long process of development, man has gradually formulated his categories and ideals and has finally discovered the region of true values. Man, as a spiritual subject, has from the first been deeply interested in that which would best preserve his being. He has, thus, as Tiele remarks, been constantly developing his self-consciousness, and, according to his mental level, constantly seeking harmony between the various interests of his being. When he reached a certain stage of intelligence, he demanded that which on a lower level he saw no necessity of, namely, harmony between science

³⁰ *Vid.* “*Die Philosophie des Als Ob,*” pp. 4-12, Vaihinger.

and religion, and between morality and religion, but what he was seeking was really a satisfied or harmonious self-consciousness. Having, then, reached the stage of intelligence on which he now stands, is he willing to throw overboard his ideals, renounce his deepest loyalties and give up his religion? Standing on a table-land of thought towards which he has struggled for ten thousand years, is he willing to step down altogether or, having attained this eminence, will he not rather scan the horizon of the rarified atmosphere until he gains a clearer view of the City of God?

When man refuses to anthropomorphize in respect of his God he places himself in a position similar to that of Ludwig Feuerbach who in his *Gedanken ueber Tod und Unsterblichkeit* referred to the Gods as creations of the human will or of

man's wishes (*Wunschwesen*) and immortality (*Unsterblichkeit*) as a subjective idea designed merely to give man comfort here below. The Absolute Spirit of Hegel was in this view degraded to the subjective spirit of man and religion and loyalty became nothing but marks of sheer weakness on the part of human beings.

All the pragmatistic writers would fully agree with this standpoint, for with them man is caught within the circle of his own experience and finds it impossible to grope his way out. Within this circle, God is said to be just what he is "known-as." He is a name for something that happens within individual experience, namely for the good consequences that flow from the belief. Love, reverence and loyalty as directed Godwards are attitudes of hope or of long-distance optimism. Self-consciousness and

self-control, as ascribed to God, are again, on this view, purely projections—characteristics that the human soul would wish him to have—for with these possessions he would be better fitted to render help to humans who may be in need of it, and would be better able to win their respect. But Pragmatism is a self-contradiction and thus unworthy to be called a philosophy. Thus, its ideas here do not merit much attention and man's ontological consciousness will finally bring about its death.

CHAPTER III

Absolutism and Personality

There have been so many different forms of Absolutism, that we shall have to restrict ourselves to the doctrines of a few of the most noted exponents of Absolute Idealism and shall deal with this system only as it touches personality directly or remotely. So many writers of repute have taken in hand to state and oppose this doctrine that it would be out of place just here to attempt any lengthy argument on the subject. Absolutism taken in isolation from Idealism is very old and refers to an attempt to take the highest ideal that the mind can conceive and to construct out of it a metaphysical object. Thus, Plato was an absolutist with his

metaphysical ideal conceived as “the Good” and Spinoza, in more modern times, belonged to the same class believing in the reality of an “Infinite Substance.” Upon the basis of Kant’s *objektive Einheit der Apperception* Hegel built his “Absolute Idea,” transforming it into a metaphysical entity whence came the “Absolute Ideal Experience” of Joachim, the “Absolute Unity” of Bosanquet, the “Inscrutable Reality” of Bradley and the “Absolute Will” of Royce and Münsterberg.

(1) Block Universe.

Professor James, I think, was the first to describe Absolutism as the conception of a “block universe.” It is thus described because the universe is conceived as being a complete network of relations. There are no loose ends anywhere for, on

this view, everything is caught within the grasp of one complete mind. Mr. Joachim reminds us that "there can be one and *only one* such experience: or *only one* significant whole For it is *absolute* self-fulfilment, absolutely self-contained significance, that is postulated."³¹ Royce practically agrees that "reality" is an "absolutely organized experience" which is a life or will that is once for all completed. Man takes his place as a bare item in the life of this Absolute Being that repudiates everything not itself and even throws its mantle over Satan himself for evil is regarded only as a necessary incomplete stage of the Completed Life.

Nothing from the outside can penetrate this Absolute Whole for, indeed, there is nothing external to it

³¹ *Vid.* "The Nature of Truth," pp. 78-79. See also "The Conception of God," Royce, LeConte, Etc.

for all relations as well as all entities are in the Absolute. For Lotze, consciousness came as an afterthought to unite the one and the many. That is, the world was once a manifold and the ego proceeded to unify and relate its disjointed parts. But Lotze was only a half-hearted absolutist. For Royce, however, if there ever was any disconnection it would have been utterly vain to try and bring unity. Either things were always caught in the meshes of the Over-mind or they were always loose and disconnected. Thus, the absolutist must have all or none.

Certainly, *importance* and *reality* are closely related and when once a person discovers that which is of the most importance, he may well set it down as the real, but why should the conception of “absolute unity” be of more value than that of “identity” or

the conception of the “one” be of more value than that of the “many”? To some men, as for instance Nietzsche, *individuality, freedom and separateness* are the great and valuable conceptions even when their lives are “fullest” and their souls “at the highest stretch”. Nietzsche would be the last one to close his Byron and open his Goethe. *Independence* was the valuable conception for him as it is today for all the pragmatists. The *Uebermensch* was an out-an-out anarchist shaking off, as soon as possible, all absolute relations to his brother man as well as to the universe. He was as heroic as Milton’s Satan, never regretting anything but willing to repeat his acts whenever opportunity offered.

McTaggart reminds us that organic unity is by no means an adequate conception. A mighty system

with every part mutually determining every other, abstracts all courage from us and fills us with awe, making man seem so small that he is of no more value in the universe than a chip or straw. Such a system is not logically necessary for the finite self is not so full of contradictions as the absolutist imagines. It is possible for a finite being to be distinct without being wholly isolated, or he may be related to the universe without being absolutely caught within a closed system. In fact, the realist points out that relatedness and independence are entirely compatible and he indicates numerous examples in which this is true. The principle of contradiction may be held without at the same time holding that all relations are in the Absolute and all truths predicates of the Absolute. The principle of unity may be ac-

cepted, as for instance, Doctor Ward accepts it, but one must wait for experience to find out the kind of unity there is in the universe. It is nothing short of an imposition to foist an Absolute and “systematic unity of things” upon the thinking man at the very beginning and then try to make every other proposition and doctrine fit into it. The principles used are not of such a nature as to absolutely imply one another. The mind may separate them and yet retain its rationality.

(2) Abstracts Personality.

By defining the Absolute as an Infinite Will, Professor Royce does not refuse super-personality to him but the logical outcome of the whole system abstracts personality in any acceptable sense. Again, as Prof. Mezes points out, this being has only a modi-

cum of spirituality. "His experience consists of a vast physical universe with its myriads of mechanically whirling atoms, and, tucked away in one corner, the least bit of spiritual life, which to be sure, has its questions answered and its desires gratified."³² Certainly, all science is comprised in this being as well as all feeling-contents of everything that has consciousness on the face of the earth but there is so much dead or sleeping matter in his nature--parts of an Absolute that are drunken or asleep as Hegel would say--that very little spiritual quality remains and, with all this, how can such a being find satisfaction and how can he be a personality? Certainly, as Le Conte suggests, if you remove the "brain-cap"³³ of a man,

³² *Vid.* "The Conception of God," Royce, LeConte, Howison, Mezes, p. 58.

³³ *Ibid.* p. 67.

you cannot see anything there but molecular movements and "vibrations." You cannot see a soul, a spirit, a personality and if you say that a spirit or personality is there you simply do it on the basis of interpretation. Only from the point of view of the thinker himself do things seem different and a psychical life be felt. It is the same with physical nature apart from man. From man's normal point of view, nothing of a spiritual nature presents itself in the cosmos, but he is sure that a personality—that is a perfect personality—is there and somehow related to it.

But suppose this being is Absolute Thought and entirely passive. On such a basis it is even harder to apply personality to it, for self-direction or purpose is an attribute of personality and a being that is powerless

and passionless can hardly attain to this level. Professor Royce saw this difficulty and inconsistently metamorphosed his Absolute passionless Thought into a Will. One can hardly conceive of an inactive will. Thus, the Absolute is, after all, not powerless in his own way, for in all knowledge that is in all creation, he is acknowledged to be active.

One can clearly see that Royce's system although "thicker" than other absolutistic systems, places the Absolute on such a level that, although it is an Infinite Will, it is hard to conceive of it, even in this light, as a personality. In fact, Royce himself hints that God may be an entire stranger to personality, and not know what it means. Personality connotes, above all, self-direction and cannot be a bare will without emotion. If the aesthetic judgment or the judg-

ment concerning the beautiful object in any particular case is the result of will—activity involving the Absolute,—can it be made without emotion on his part or if we are right that science is an enthusiasm for truth and religion an enthusiasm for righteousness, can the Absolute, who is also involved in these, escape enthusiasm in the judgments or laws that make up these disciplines? If so, instead of being greater than man, he is good deal less for he does not possess that which to man is of much importance.

What does Mr. Bradley have to say on the subject? He reminds us that the “Absolute is not personal, nor is it moral, nor is it beautiful.” Thus, the effort to exalt the Divine Being above all thought and above all imagination, removes him entirely from the reach of human beings,

and when once this is done, the mind drops back helplessly in the struggle and the wings of the passional life are closely clipped.

The final question is: which is easier and more satisfying to man's total life, to believe in a personal Deity whose nature is not exhausted in the world, or a colorless or entirely transcendent Will, that includes everything and, in the last resort, not only repudiates personality for itself, but for the wills that are dependent upon it?

Again, as we have seen, Absolutism also refuses personality to man. Royce defines a finite personality as a "will to do something"³⁴ and discovers that the chief thing about this being, is dissatisfaction. But, after all, he is said to be only a fragment

³⁴ *Vid.* "William James and Other Essays," p. 293.

of the Absolute and his longing is only a slight expression of the Divine longing. "In me, then, God is discontented with his own temporal expression."³⁵ According to this, God's discontent constitutes individuality and each individual is considered barely a mode of Absolute existence appearing in time. "A new individual" is merely a new kind of life-process.³⁶ Again, "Individuals are all the various expressions of the Absolute, in so far as they are many."³⁷

Although Royce makes man merely an item in an absolute system, yet he often speaks of him as if he had a reality all his own. The pronoun "I" as the expression of a self-directing personality, occurs everywhere in his

³⁵ *Op. Cit.* p. 295.

³⁶ *Vid.* "The World and the Individual," Vol. II, p. 448, 308, Royce.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 336.

books. Thus, "I am essentially the wanderer, whose home is in eternity."³⁸ Again, "My duty, I myself must do . . . I am discontent with my personality."³⁹ These expressions, and similar ones all throughout his works, are hardly consistent with the position that "the world is the expression of a single will."⁴⁰ If the latter is true, there can be no real self-direction or freedom in any individual and man's reality consists in his being a small wavelet of the Infinite Ocean which rises up from the surface for a moment and then sinks back once more into its bosom. His only uniqueness consists in the fact that he is a particular part of an Absolute Whole. In making these remarks,

³⁸ *Vid.* "William James and Other Essays," p. 295, Royce.

³⁹ *Op. Cit.* p. 292, 295.

⁴⁰ *Op. Cit.* p. 274.

we are not exaggerating the situation but simply following James' suggestion and placing ourselves at the center of this man's "philosophic vision" and not depending on any post-mortem method.

Mr. Bradley, whose philosophic vision it is hard to acquire and much harder to agree with, attempts to criticise out of existence, many things that are very useful to us, because they lack the perfection that is found in the perfect experience of the Absolute. Every conception that he examines, such as time and space, exhibits the relational form and, because of this, they are forever condemned. Chief among the conceptions criticised by Mr. Bradley, is that of human personality, to which, indeed, the relational form is a necessity. Whatever the history of the conception may be, it is certain

that modern society cannot dispense with it and yet hang together. Without it there can be no freedom and without freedom, there can be no goodness and man becomes a mechanical item in a vast closed-in system. It acts not only as the originator of valuations, but also as a norm, for the process of valuation. Professor Bosanquet gets his norm for truth from human personality, for he in many places, insists that truth has the character of individuality. Also Bradley will have it that reality is individual. The conception of individuality here is not merely logical. It gets its ground and support from the experience of human personality. Although the above writers have naively used the conception as thus originated and supported and used it as an instrument to make clear their conceptions of Deity, they repudiate

its reality as belonging to man. That is, they repudiate the source of their chief conception of Deity, and, therefore, acknowledge that they do know what individuality is.

The difficulty that both Bosanquet and Bradley find, is in the definition of the boundaries of the self. Thus, Bosanquet compares it to a crystal forming in a solution, with the implication, that the self is as much a part of the environment, as a crystal is of the solution from which it is drawn. There is no disgrace, he thinks, in reducing the contents of the soul to the environment for the deepest spiritual souls have done so. Mr. Bradley differs somewhat, from Bosanquet, in that he holds that no part of reality, whatever, has any existence outside of finite centres of experience, and reality is experience and nothing else. The Absolute would, thus, be the ab-

solute unity of these finite experiences. But he holds, that the boundaries of the self are altogether confused, so that no one can tell where they are or how far they reach. Prof. James has shown how hard it is to mark out these boundaries. The material self, he reminds us, includes, first the body, then the clothing, the immediate family, the home, and extends as far as one's bank-account. The spiritual self as felt, however, is reduced to "a collection of cephalic movements of 'adjustments'."⁴¹ But James acknowledges that "over and above these" there is an obscure feeling. But there is no need of singling out the self, as the one entity in all creation, that exhibits confused and indefinite boundaries. Where in the whole of all experience do we find de-

⁴¹ *Vid.* "Psychology," Vol. 1, pp. 305 ff.

finiteness in this respect? Sense-experiences come to us in a mass and have the faculty of "boiling over" very often, so that we cannot tell where they begin or end. Therefore, the self cannot be singled out as the only entity that has indefinite boundaries and this objection is, thus, illegitimate.

Man's rational nature demands a unity of reality, but it is not driven to an absolute unity, that is, it is not forced to a particular kind of unity much less to a unity that makes any true personality impossible. There is a unity in the whole, we are sure, but that unity is of such a nature as to leave room for permanent personality without which there can be no preservation of values and no ultimate hope for man. There is a unity in the whole, but inclusive reason, or reason defined as embracing the total

reaction of man's spiritual nature, demands that there be room also for freedom of activity, both human and Divine.

(3) It Deprives of Morality Both Man and God.

Mr. Hobhouse has shown very clearly that Absolute Idealism saps "intellectual and moral sincerity" and "softens the edges of all hard contrasts between right and wrong, truth and falsity."⁴² This indictment is a correct one, in the face of what absolutists have said concerning evil. For instance, Bosanquet tells us in substance, that there is room in the divine perfection for all evil. And once more he assures us, that pain, sorrow and conflict, are essential ingredients of reality. That is, ac-

⁴² *Vid.* "Democracy and Reaction," pp. 78-79, L. T.

cording to this, the Absolute Being is perfect within itself and yet pain and sorrow and, in a word, evil, have their place somehow within it. Here Eucken's "Either-or" comes clearly to the front. Evil must be either outside the Absolute Being, or within it. If it is within it, it is impossible for it to be perfect; if it is without it, then it cannot include all, and is not absolute.

Royce holds, that evil can be defined as anything that is repugnant to anybody. That is, it is conceived as opposition to purpose or will. For instance, pain is evil, if there is someone to whom it is repugnant, if there is some will that it opposes. The problem is merely the problem of finitude. Man is a fragment of an Absolute Will, and he meets with opposition as he goes about his task and this opposition is regarded by him as

an evil. But in the last resort on this view, the distinction between good and evil fades entirely away.

Every thorough-going Monism such as the system of Parmenides and Spinoza tends to make little of the distinction between good and evil. Bradley, Bosanquet and Royce, are not behind in this tendency. The levelling effect is the same in all. It is essentially nonsensical, they think, to say that a thing is bad or should be other than it actually is for moral distinctions have only a relation to beings in time. Goods and bads can be restated merely as degrees of reality. The final criticism of them is, that they belong to the world of appearances and, as soon as man can throw the light of his understanding upon them, the distinction between them vanishes away. The great

thing is to understand, for to understand is to rise above.

Professor Mezes has pointed out very clearly, that Absoluteness or Completeness and Goodness, are incompatible. A Being who is absolutely complete, comprising the past, present and future in one "luminous moment," is certainly without progress, without struggle, without achievement, and therefore, without morality. The only moral good that we have any hint of, is won with difficulty in the face of struggle. It is hard to define goodness achieved otherwise. If, then, it is true that goodness demands struggle, progress and growth, the Absolute is not good but simply complete, and self-satisfied.

Can a Deity who does not possess goodness or the personality that is the requisite of goodness, satisfy the

modern mind? Can a Being that sees no distinction of kind between good and bad, be of comfort to us in an earthly struggle that has upon it all the marks of being real? Can a God "possessed with a devil," win our respect? No, even if evil is an illusion, we are face to face with the illusion and this illusion itself is nothing short of an evil. Again, a universal illusion does not fall far below a reality. Finally, a God that, like Jonah's whale, swallows everything that comes its way, whether contradictions or non-contradictions, turmoil or peace, good or evil, digesting all with equal relish and pronouncing them all good, fails to arouse any moral enthusiasm in the human breast. The abstracting of moral goodness from God and the minimizing of our moral judgments in general, are fatal defects in Absolutism

of an idealistic kind for our moral nature is just as fundamental as our scientific. If man's nature is to be fundamentally and essentially satisfied, he must not hesitate to apply his moral postulates any more than he hesitates to apply his scientific, for the world is not only a rational order but a moral order. Science is by no means discouraged because it finds much apparent confusion in the sphere in which it deals, neither should religion, because of the so-called evils it encounters in investigating the moral order of the world. To be entirely consistent, man must hold just as strongly to his moral and religious principles as to his scientific.

The theistic conception of Infinite Goodness, which flows from the conception of Divine Personality, can be justified as well as the conception of Infinite Rationality. The reason

why men in general are not so sure of the former as of the latter, is, that the former has not had so many unbiased investigators as the latter. In their religious enthusiasm, earnest men of the past have accepted without question, the religious postulate, not considering it necessary to try and discover the rational basis for it, while men with scientific enthusiasm have gone to work in a cold-blooded and critical manner and have not hesitated to question the scientific postulate when appearances were against it. Most scientific men, however, see very clearly today, that without this postulate, true science must come to an end. Again, the necessities of physical life on the planet are increasingly demanding man's attention, and the more earnestly he turns to present comforts and physical well-being, the less en-

thusiasm he acquires to seek the vindication of the theistic postulate.

The path by which this conception as well as the conception of personality can be justified, is indicated by Immanuel Kant. Although a Divine Will of Infinite Goodness is not admitted by him as possible to reason in its theoretical use, yet in his great work on *The Practical Reason*, he opens the way for the discovery of such a Will, apart from the mechanical use of the formal categories. The reasonable will, he asserts, does not hesitate to postulate the existence of objects that are not amendable to the scientific and mechanical activity of the mind. That is, Kant acknowledges, that the will of man breaks the bounds set by the pure reason, levels the barriers placed by itself for a particular purpose and reaches objects of supreme impor-

tance beyond. The evidence in this new sphere of knowledge, Kant thinks, is stronger than in the theoretical, for when he asserts that it is necessary to "remove knowledge in order to make room for faith," he means by faith, a knowledge not weaker than the theoretical, but stronger. In a sense, then, Kant admits that speculative reason is subordinate to practical. This he calls, the primacy of the practical reason (*Primat der praktischen Vernunft*). That is, the understanding and will are not co-ordinate powers (*Vermögen*) but the former is subordinate to the latter.

Apart from Kant's handicap of building upon the discredited faculty psychology of the past with its gaps in human nature, his position would be very near that of Pragmatism. The psychology of the gaps influenced

him in making theoretical knowledge completely theoretical and practical knowledge purely practical. With this mechanical method, one does not run into the other. With a more modern psychology, however, in his possession, he would have found it very easy to follow the path now trodden by Pragmatism. Dr. Schiller never tires of reiterating the fact that it is useless to make the intellect oppose the will or *vice versa* for the very forms of the intellect are in the last resort, forms of the will. The will appears to be concerned in every act of intellect and the whole human being is involved in every act of knowledge.

The idea of the bill of rights of the human will, suggested by Kant with a grudging mind, and carried to its logical conclusion by James and Schiller, is today by no means the ex-

clusive possession of pragmatistic writers. Neo-Hegelianism in America has assimilated all that is good in the doctrine and yet, is not compelled to alter essentially any part of the fundamental basis of its philosophy. Even Green, Bradley and Bosanquet have repudiated bare formalism and Professor Royce has given the will a most prominent place in his epistemology. In the realm of psychology, Ward and Stout have repeatedly emphasized the purposive nature of mental life. In fact, the whole of present-day philosophy tends to include feeling and will in its consideration of the world of reality. This is very noticeable in the works of such men as Eucken, Paulsen, Weber and Andrew Seth. Every movement of consciousness seems to be directed to some end and involves some purpose.

Aristotle's characterization of

man as "thinking desire" shows that this is by no means a novel standpoint. Sturt regards the constructive judgment as always exhibiting a purpose and Wundt hits the nail on the head when he remarks: "Will is not merely a function which sometimes accrues to consciousness, and is sometimes lacking; it is an integral property of consciousness,"⁴³ and Professor Dewey will hear nothing else but that consciousness is so closely connected with will that in order to extinguish the will, consciousness would have to die also. Thus, it is universally acknowledged that there is no conscious activity without purpose.

The close student of the Kantian system can see shining through all the mental gaps and lines of demar-

⁴³ *Vid.* "Ethics," English tr. 111, p. 7, Wundt.

cation, the tacit acknowledgement of the activity, through all, of the human will. The "show world" comes not by chance, but man's rational will produces it. If that "show-world," as systematically ordered, is the result of the functioning of categories not derived from experience, why should these categories be confined to the world of experience? Why should they not be applied to objects beyond experience, that is, to God and to those human attributes that depend upon him?

Kant either did not see the solution clearly enough to give a very lucid answer, or his faculty psychology kept him back. Nevertheless, as we hinted before, Kant actually filled the gaps that he had previously made, for the essential and active will, working according to fixed laws in the scientific world, finally broke

down all barriers and reached reality outside the realm of mechanism. The essential will, not satisfied with what it created or discovered by means of its own mechanical laws, reached beyond and gained an insight into the realm where God, Freedom and Immortality had their being.

Thus, Kant is actually on our side when we say that the fundamental will is involved in all consciousness, that is to say, reason in its widest and fullest sense actually possesses knowledge of a Personality of Infinite Goodness. The key that fits the lock, although accidentally discovered, must be the right key. Thus, this postulate fits human nature so well and satisfies it so thoroughly that it must be fundamental, that is, it must be true.

IV

Conclusion

It has, I think, been made reasonably clear to the thinking mind that the Divine Being is spiritual and not material. For matter to define the essence of the Most High is a contradiction in terms for matter is, by no means, man's highest concept when his life is fullest and his soul at its highest stretch. Even the pregnant concept of substance, notwithstanding Spinoza, is inadequate, for it is much too vacuous to satisfy the intellect and too dead to stimulate the emotions. Such instrumental concepts, when applied to the Deity, do not command the moral respect and support of humanity. Man's God cannot be of the nature of the clod

that he treads under his feet. He must, in some way, be akin to his own highest nature and, at least, reach the level of spirituality. If he fail in this, he is entirely disqualified for his office. When once he is acknowledged to be on such a level, the human heart and intellect acquire and retain a certain deep satisfaction, for a source of ethical communication is now considered possible and man, in the midst of life's struggles, can look to such a One for sympathy and help.

The amount of spirituality that Absolute Idealism leaves to both man and God is so narrow that the mind, not constitutionally absolutistic, revolts against this way of defining such beings. Such a view leaves man with a bare spark of ephemeral spiritual existence and God with a vast nature consisting, in its outward reach, of moving stars and planets,

plunging with incredible swiftness through the vast abysses of dark space and in its inside reach of movements of millions of whirling atoms and electrons, but possessing only a tiny modicum of spiritual life attached to a comparatively few organized beings. The essential spiritual life of the universe is thus so small an item that it might escape the notice of the Absolute altogether. Why this vast amount of dead and sleeping reality? How can we excuse a drunken Deity when the best among men always practise sobriety? Can it be that man is more spiritual and has more of his nature under his control than his Creator? His entire being repudiates this conclusion.

Man cannot make the slightest advance either in science, philosophy or religion, without interpretation. What he finds in science is a few facts

carefully tabulated, the rest is interpretation on the basis of intellectual satisfaction. Thus, Oliver Lodge, in opposing the relativity of Einstein, reminds us that we can only observe matter and all else is inference. But we cannot even observe matter, for matter is shot through and through with concept stuff. In other words, matter is an interpretation. We cannot see an electric current, we only observe bodies behaving in a certain manner. The former is an interpretation. No man has ever sensed an electron, an atom or the ether. They have all come in a similar manner.

Philosophy exhibits the same phenomenon. Certainly, here the intellectual reach is more comprehensive but the same instruments are used. Man cannot renounce his intellectual tools and remain rational.

His interpretation is, once more, on the basis of satisfaction, only the scope is a little wider for now he must not only satisfy the intellect but the moral and emotional life as well. James has truly said that a philosopher that fails in the latter, fails entirely. Thus, in this important field man interprets according to reason in its most inclusive aspect and inevitably conceives his God as spiritual.

Again, to the diligent student of historical philosophical thought, it becomes increasingly clear that, for a long time, the intellectual current had been setting strongly towards unity. Such a momentum characterized this movement that in Hegel and the other great rationalists, the flood overflowed its banks submerging every visible and invisible object until sober thought discovered that such

a movement, if made too inclusive, would bring about the end of all individual thought and action and, thus, submerge the philosopher himself. Consequently, the thinking man called a halt to this way of regarding reality, thoroughly convinced that total unity was unnecessary and even actually harmful. He, therefore, promptly rejected it in favor of a unity that allowed to the individual sufficient freedom for his own moral life.

The practical mind of William James rightly rejected at once the “block universe” of Professor Royce and his school, for he saw that, if at bottom there was only one “absolutely organized experience,” man’s life was only a bubble on the wave which burst with the pressure of the first slight wind upon it, never to be reformed as an individual. Certainly,

man would always be a part of the Absolute, but what would that signify seeing that no trace of him as an individual would ever after be found except perhaps by the Absolute itself. The prize of a completed life with no rough edges, remote from the possibility of struggle, would be a poor substitute for continued personal life with the enjoyment of comparative freedom.

Thus, the mind at its highest reach, rejects Absolute Idealism once and for all, and it does so on the basis of the concept of satisfaction which is indeed only another name for importance. Whatever seems to man, in his best moments, to be of highest importance to him, will be related to and form a part of his God and he, in most cases, will regard himself as being logically driven to postulate this attribute of Him. Why should men

regard absolute unity as all important? For reasons before adduced, it is an inadequate category and it is entirely illegitimate to apply it to the universe at the very beginning of investigation without waiting for the further report of experience. What we find is a certain grade of unity which is far from absolute. A limited unity satisfies best both intellect and emotion.

Pluralism is a philosophy that conceives the universe as almost entirely shattered. It does not teach the entire lack of unity but believes that since only certain grades are found, man should take his cue as to the nature of the whole from those fragmentary experiences. Things are found with one another, thus, there is a unity of "witness." Things are humanly known together, there is, then, "noetic unity." Other kinds of

unity are also found, but the pluralist, on the basis of his empiricism, absolutely refuses to interpret the universe as one.

Some pluralists regard the world as consisting of an immense group of conative individuals or centres of consciousness. It is considered to be entirely spiritual consisting of monads or entelechies, each with its own experiences with different degrees of spiritual clearness. This “piecemeal Idealism” exhibits certain great difficulties. Social intercourse and the laws of nature find no adequate explanation on this basis. For an immense multitude that no man can number of centres of consciousness to agree together so well that immutable laws of nature could be evolved to which they would all submit, is so miraculous as to be out of the question. Leibnitz’ law of continuity is

all very well in its way, but for the world to create and secure obedience to this law alone, a miraculous and almost inconceivable adjustment was necessary among untold millions of centres of consciousness. If every monad is entirely different from every other, except in spiritual essence, how is it possible for them to agree socially, so as to be able to live together? Lotze saw the difficulty here and brought in the Absolute Being as the necessary condition of interaction. But with the Absolute came another difficulty, namely the abstraction of individual freedom. Lotze did not realize the truth that a Spiritual World Ground that is not an Absolute, was sufficient to explain this wonderful phenomenon. His interpretation failed because it ignored both moral and emotional sat-

isfaction and trusted the bare intellect.

Bare Pluralism is, thus, an unfinished doctrine, defective both in its starting-point and in its forward reach. It also involves other difficulties such as the pre-existence of souls and some thinkers have even regarded it as self-contradictory. Be this as it may, the chief practical difficulty under which it labors is that it so deeply disappoints the human soul which seeks a Divine Being who is powerful enough to make His ideals prevail. Theism furnishes this Being as the spiritual foundation of the world. He is not merely one among many, however, powerful, but a Will that directs the universe, spiritual, intelligent and personal, upon whom all lesser wills depend, but not in such a way as to abstract all freedom.

In respect of personality, either in man or God, we must again turn to the only open door, namely, reasonable interpretation. No man has ever found a self, either human or divine. Sense experience never presents it. Certain fragmentary experiences appear in human life with some kind of a vague nucleus and man flies at once to the citidal and asserts, without doubt, that he is a personality. This satisfies his life and affords dignity. If he could remove the "brain-cap" of the universe, he would find no spirit or soul or mind only certain persistent and regular movements as might be discovered in the human brain. If he followed the Baconian method, championed today by Einstein and Steinmetz, and contented himself with bare description, he would waste his life for nothing. No, he begins to interpret. His en-

tire nature demands a satisfactory interpretation. He concludes, with certainty, that he is in contact with and vitally related to, a Supreme Personality that consciously directs the whole and gives stability to his life. Notwithstanding Leuba, man will never accept an "impersonal substitute" for Deity for his entire nature rebels against such a being.

The tendency of science is to depersonalize, to neglect the individual in favor of general law. Philosophy, although of universal scope, always returns to the individual, and finally discovers that the fundamental scientific laws take their rise from certain more essential laws deeply entrenched in the human mind. Pragmatism claims that they begin here and, thus, have a lowly origin. But the rational mind looks deeper for their origin and conceives them as indicating the acti-

vity of a Divine Will. So then, philosophy has no quarrel with science but urges it to do its best to bring to light new laws, but it calmly and with assurance remarks: "All your laws go back essentially to the same source. They have as their backbone, certain fundamental categories that are so deeply entrenched in the human mind that all intelligent expression comes to an end without them. Decide not to use them and man's intelligent activity will dwindle to the mere pointing of the finger." Since modern logic has brought to light those all-important laws, the intelligent mind would be recreant to its duty if it did not point out, with all assurance that they belong to a Divine Will, manifesting itself in the human.

Finally, man is more influenced by moral ideals than by the physical pressure of heat and cold. Their in-

fluence in his life is very real. If the real is that of which the consciousness must take account, they are indeed realities and require a mind for their existence. The fragmentary minds of individuals are not a sufficient home for them. The fact that the particular ideals are all ranged under a universal which demands that the good must be striven after, makes clear to us that there is a moral order and that it is a part of real Reality. The physical order certainly opposes man in his struggle for the ideal, but this also is according to purpose. The two orders are somehow harmonized and each contributes its share in indicating the presence of a personal and unified Deity.

